



BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER EARLY DETECTION

WHAT IS THE PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM?

- During the past decade, more than a half-million women died from breast and cervical cancer.
- In 2002, an estimated 203,000 new breast cancer cases and 13,000 new cervical cancer cases were diagnosed, an estimated 40,000 women died from breast cancer and an estimated 4,100 died from cervical cancer.
- Timely mammography screening could prevent approximately 15 - 30% of all deaths from breast cancer in women over age 40, and Papanicolaou (Pap) testing could prevent virtually all deaths from cervical cancer.

WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

CDC's National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP) has raised awareness about the importance of early detection, contributing to the 20% increase in mammography utilization among women over age 50 since the program's inception in 1991. The program targets low-income women with little or no health insurance and has helped reduce disparities in screening for racial and ethnic minority women. Approximately 50% of the women screened have been from racial/ethnic minority groups. More than 3 million screening tests have been provided with more than 10,000 breast cancers, 45,000 precancerous cervical lesions and more than 700 cases of invasive cervical cancer being diagnosed. CDC works with states to ensure that women diagnosed through NBCCEDP have access to treatment. In addition, the Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act of 2000 allows women in the NBCCEDP access to treatment through Medicaid.

Example of program in action: In a unique collaboration with the Missouri Department of Social Services, the Missouri Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) hires welfare-to-work recipients as outreach coordinators to reach potentially eligible women for breast and cervical cancer screenings. These coordinators have referred more than 3,350 women to BCCCP screening providers. Twelve coordinators have used their outreach experience to obtain permanent, full-time employment. The program won a national award for public health innovation and a 1999 Missouri Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

CDC will continue to work with NBCCED programs to increase the number of eligible women to be screened and, for programs already at capacity, to implement effective re-screening programs. Interventions that reach underserved women, particularly when early stages of cancer can be detected, will be used. CDC will work closely with the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) to implement the Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act.

For additional information on this and other CDC programs, visit www.cdc.gov/programs.

January 2002